

Listing of Claims

Claims 1-29 (Cancelled)
Claims 30-34 (Withdrawn)
Claims 35-65 (Cancelled)
Claims 66-84 (New)

1-29 (Cancelled)

30. (Withdrawn) The method of retaining and removing a catheter tube in a patient comprising the steps of:

 implanting a catheter having a zone in which the catheter tube and a companion member are stitched together with a longitudinal wire wherein the zone is positioned in the patient and the wire extends to a point outside the patient, said zone retaining the catheter in the patient, and

 removing the catheter by accessing a proximal portion of said wire, withdrawing said wire and individually removing the catheter tube and the companion member.

31. (Withdrawn) The method of retaining and removing a multiple tube catheter in a patient comprising the steps of:

 implanting a catheter having a zone in which at least two tubes are stitched together with a longitudinal wire wherein the zone is positioned in the patient and the wire extends to a point outside the patient, said zone retaining the catheter in the patient, and removing the catheter by accessing a proximal portion of said wire, withdrawing said wire and individually removing each of said tubes.

32. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 31 further comprising the steps of:

During said step of implanting the catheter, providing a separating flexible prong proximal of said zone extending from a first one of said tubes into a recess on the second one of said tubes to hold said tubes apart to prevent distal movement of the catheter, and

during said step of removing the catheter, removing said prong from said recess.

33. (Withdrawn) The method of implanting and removing a multiple tube catheter implanted in a patient comprising the steps of:

providing a multiple tube catheter assembly, having first and second tubes and a wire extending longitudinally within the sidewalls of said tubes along a predetermined zone and passing through contacting surfaces of said tubes at said zone to hold said tubes together at said zone, said wire extending proximally within the sidewall of said first one of said tubes to a predetermined proximal position,

implanting said assembly in a patient with said zone within the patient and the proximal ends of said wire extending outside of the patient,

accessing the proximal end of said wire,

removing said wire from said catheter to disconnect said tubes at said zone, and

then individually removing each of said multiple tubes from the patient.

34. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 33 wherein: said step of removing comprises pulling on said wire.

35-65 (Cancelled)

66. (New) A catheter assembly comprising:

one tube having a sidewall and a longitudinal companion member, said tube and said companion member coupled to and contacting one another at surfaces thereof along a predetermined zone, and

a linear engagement member extending longitudinally within said sidewall of said tube and through said companion member, said tube and said companion member held together solely at said zone,

each of the distal most and proximal most ends of said linear engagement member being embedded in said sidewall of said tube,

said tube, said companion member and said linear engagement member extending proximal of said zone by an amount sufficient to extend out of the body of a patient in whom the catheter is implanted,

said linear engagement member being accessible upon cutting through said sidewall within which said linear engagement member is embedded, thereby permitting withdrawal of said linear engagement member to cause said tube and said companion member to disconnect and permit separate, independent withdrawal of said tube and said companion member from a patient.

67. (New) The catheter assembly of claim 66 further comprising:

a flexible separating prong extending outward from the surface of one of said tube and said companion member to abut the surface of the other at a location proximal of said zone to force said tube and said companion member to diverge proximal of said zone.

68. (New) The catheter assembly of claim 66 wherein: said surfaces at said zone are flat surfaces.

69. (New) The catheter assembly of claim 67 wherein: said surfaces at said zone are flat surfaces.

70. (New) The catheter assembly of claim 66 wherein: said linear engagement member is a set of two wires.

71. (New) The catheter assembly of claim 67 wherein: said linear engagement member is a set of two wires.

72. (New) The catheter assembly of claim 68 wherein: said linear engagement member is a set of two wires.

73. (New) The catheter assembly of claim 69 wherein: said linear engagement member is a set of two wires.

74. (New) The catheter assembly of claim 67 further comprising:

a recess on the surface of said tube or said companion member against which said prong abuts, said recess engaging the abutting end of said prong.

75. (New) The catheter assembly of claim 74 wherein: said linear engagement member extends through said prong.

76. (New) The catheter assembly of claim 66 wherein: said zone is located on a portion of the catheter that is located within a patient when the catheter is implanted in a patient.

77. (New) The catheter assembly of claim 67 wherein: said zone is located on a portion of the catheter that is located within a patient when the catheter is implanted in a patient.

78. (New) The catheter assembly of claim 66 wherein: said linear engagement member is a surgical suture.

79. (New) A catheter assembly comprising:

at least one tube and a longitudinal companion member coupled to and contacting one another at surfaces thereof along a predetermined zone, said tube and said companion member each having a sidewall,

a wire extending longitudinally within said sidewalls of each of said tube and said companion member, and passing through surfaces of said tube and said companion member at said zone to hold said tube and said companion member together at said zone, said tube and said companion member being held together solely at said zone,

said tube, said companion member and said wire extending proximal of said zone by an amount sufficient to extend out of the body of a patient in whom the catheter is embedded,

said surfaces at said zone being flat surfaces,

said wire being accessible upon cutting through said sidewall within which said wire is embedded, thereby permitting withdrawal of said wire to cause said tube and said companion

member to disconnect and permit separate, independent withdrawal of said tube and said companion member from a patient,

a flexible separating prong extending outward from the surface of one of said tube and said companion member to abut the surface of the other at a location proximal of said zone to force said tube and companion member to diverge proximal of said zone, and

a recess on the surface of the other of said tube or companion member against which said prong abuts, said recess engaging the abutting end of said prong.

80. (New) A dialysis catheter assembly comprising:

first and second tubes, each having a sidewall, and
a linear engagement member extending longitudinally within said sidewalls of said tubes, engaging said tubes and holding said tubes in contact at a predetermined zone, said tubes being held together solely at said zone,

said linear engagement member extending longitudinally within said sidewall of each of said tubes,

each of the distal most and proximal most ends of said linear engagement member being embedded in at least one of said sidewalls of said tubes,

said tubes and said linear engagement member extending proximal of said zone by a length sufficient to extend out of the body of a patient in whom the catheter is implanted,

whereby cutting a proximal length of those of said tubes containing said proximal end of said linear engagement

member provides access to said linear engagement member so that withdrawal of said linear engagement member will cause said tubes to disconnect and permit separate, independent withdrawal of said tubes from a patient.

81. (New) The catheter assembly of claim 80 further comprising:

a flexible separating prong extending outward from the surface of one of said tubes to abut the surface of the other at a location proximal of said zone to force said tube and said companion member to diverge proximal of said zone.

82. (New) The catheter assembly of claim 80 wherein: said linear engagement member is a set of two wires.

83. (New) The catheter assembly of claim 81 further comprising:

a recess on the surface of said tube or said companion member against which said prong abuts, said recess engaging the abutting end of said prong.

84. (New) The catheter assembly of claim 80 wherein: said zone is located on a portion of the catheter that is located within a patient when the catheter is implanted in a patient.